



# The Planets

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You're probably familiar with the Sun, the Moon and the planets, in their everyday astronomical sense.

But what about their *astrological* sense? What's their meaning and relevance in astrology, in horoscopes?

In this eBook, I'm going to briefly introduce each planet's astrological meaning. And just a reminder: astrologers will often call the Sun and Moon 'planets,' for the sake of convenience.

In astrology, each planet has certain characteristics. They all have their own particular astrological character, energy and flavour.

By understanding these attributes, we can get a sense of how the planets operate and influence our horoscope. By 'horoscope' we mean the diagram that shows (among other things) the planets positions at the time, date and location of our birth.

Understanding the planets is a cornerstone of learning astrology. As are learning about the zodiac signs, houses and planetary aspects. I'll cover these in later eBooks.

On the following pages, I'll look at each planet in turn. I'll mention both their *general* astrological characteristics and how they *specifically* operate in horoscopes.

Bear in mind that a planet's house, sign, aspects and other horoscope factors will influence the way a planet's energy will operate. Each horoscope is unique.

But I hope by the end of this eBook, you'll at least have a reasonable understanding of each planet's astrological meaning.

# Saturn 土

Saturn represents order, structure and discipline. He's (yes, Saturn's male) the most conservative of the planets. Saturn's metal is lead.

And above is his 'glyph' (pronounced 'gliff'), or symbol. There's a glyph for each planet. It's helpful to remember them. Glyphs are used in horoscope diagrams. (It's easier to use glyphs than write the planet's name every time).

If you could observe Saturn as a person, he would be a very conservative, sensible, and traditional person. He might be an upstanding and respected member of the community. He won't be flashy, but he will be reliable, sensible, down-to-earth and straightforward.

So Saturn can be seen on one level as 'boring' and not very exciting. Particularly when compared to the flashier Jupiter and Venus. But it is Saturn that is the organising principle in life. Saturn represents the consolidating, structural side of things that holds everything in life together, such as your body's skeleton and bones. Overall, Saturn doesn't over-promise. He's a 'what you see is what you get' kind of guy.

Saturn is like the brakes on a car, and Jupiter the accelerator. Jupiter's energy is about 'more', Saturn's is about 'less.' These two energies are complementary – we need them both. But contemporary Western society emphasises the Jupiter side of life, the 'you can do anything' approach. But we'll get to Jupiter shortly.

Saturn 'rules' Capricorn and Aquarius. 'Rules' means it is the zodiac sign (or signs) where a particular planet is most at home, where they can be on their best behaviour. Where they feel comfortable.

Saturn in a horoscope indicates where and how we find life a struggle, what we have to endure. It's where life can seem hard, heavy and not all that exciting. Where we might tend to be pessimistic. The 'gift' of Saturn is that hard work usually pays off. Saturn has traditionally been seen, along with Mars, as one of the 'malefic' (meaning 'not very nice') planets, as it's often associated with life's more unpleasant side. But that's a little harsh. Saturn is realistic and weighty, and yes - that can be a burden at times. But there's nevertheless a refreshing honesty to Saturn.

# Jupiter 24

If Saturn represents conservative, limiting and consolidating principles, then Jupiter is pretty much his opposite.

Jupiter is expansive, larger-than-life, bountiful and exaggerating. His (yes, another male) natural inclination is to expand things, to make things bigger, to grow and increase. Jupiter is a planet of opportunity, good luck, good fortune, money and 'wealth.' And optimism. His metal is Tin.

Our contemporary society is very Jupiter-driven. Just look at the advertising industry: Jupiter everywhere! Advertisers want us to spend. It makes everything seem affordable, with lots of promises in slick sales pitches. These are Jupiter characteristics.

Jupiter is like a car's accelerator (Saturn the brakes). Jupiter is that urge to 'go for it.' Jupiter has a sense of adventure; that anything is possible.

People who have a lot of Jupiter energy are very enthusiastic, and naturally good at sales. At best, they want everyone around them to get excited – excited about life, love, living or whatever it is they are promoting. This can include promoting themselves. And it's also a planet of speculation, gambling and taking chances.

Jupiter rules Sagittarius and Pisces. Jupiter in our horoscope indicates where we might want 'more' out of life and what we are enthusiastic about.

Jupiter, along with Venus, is traditionally seen as a 'benefic' (meaning a bringer of good things) planet. If Jupiter was a person, he'd be like Santa Claus: a larger-than-life jovial sort, who laughs a lot ('ho, ho, ho!'). And who brings gifts and optimism – at least in late December every year.

The problem with Jupiter is that we can get too caught-up in the promise, the wish. This can often turn out to be rather superficial. Jupiter tends to over-promise, and under-deliver. Unlike Saturn, which always delivers on its humbler promises.

The upside of Jupiter is benevolence, charity, optimism and good humour. The downside is the risk of over-indulgence. This leads to a temporary forgetfulness about consequences. It's like hosting a great party at a pub. You have a great time and ignore the huge bill that's accumulating. Then the following day you face the Saturn-ish reality (the bill) of that Jupiter-ish big night out.

# Mars

Mars is about action, getting stuff done. Mars in general is associated with forcefulness and assertiveness. And conflict, combat and even violence and war. It's the planet associated with soldiers, the martial arts and combative sport.

Mars rules Aries and Scorpio, and is associated with iron.

Mars energy is typically impulsive, no-nonsense. A 'let's get this done' kind of approach. Mars is more about 'doing' stuff rather than just 'talking about it.'

Someone with strong Mars energy in their horoscope will like to get things done. They might seem impulsive, possibly hostile at times, and easily bored. They don't like or want a lot of detail – a bullet point summary will do nicely, thank you!

A strong Mars person will likely be quick to anger, and forceful in their general personality. They can be blunt. They can be decisive, and effective decision-makers. They do well in the military, which likes this kind of approach.

Like Saturn, Mars is traditionally seen as a 'malefic' planet. But this is a little harsh. Like any planet, Mars has advantages and disadvantages. On the upside, Mars gets things done. Sometimes that's the necessary thing to do. On the other hand, Mars can be too impulsive. This can lead to trouble, because action might be taken before things have been correctly planned.

Mars in our horoscope will indicate our 'drive'; what kinds of things energise us. What is our urge to 'do'? Where are we impulsive? What areas of our lives are we prone to being impulsive about? What kind of general energy do we have?

And this can have a sexual dimension – particularly in terms of dating and 'chasing after' someone we desire. Mars isn't the desire (that's Venus territory), but he (yes, Mars is male) puts desire into action – pursuing what I want.

Mars is a strongly masculine energy (Venus is strongly feminine). Contemporary culture has a strong Mars component. For instance, violent movies and video games, stadium-filling mixed martial arts events.

Mars is a forceful 'get things done' planet. We need Mars. Otherwise nothing would get done! Mars is an urge to do, and is connected with our passions.

# Venus ♀

Astrologically, Venus represents what we value, what we love and desire. It's also a planet associated with beauty, love, fashion and style.

Venus is also about glamour (e.g. Hollywood), and the stereotypical celebrity culture, where everyone's beautiful. Or appears to be so. Venus is associated with cosmetics and makeup – designed to enhance beauty, one's fashion sense.

While Venus represents all these nice things, she can also be deceptive. Like the other planets, there's the flip side. And Venus's flip side is that desire and its associated temptations can trap us. Rather like a drug.

Someone who has a strongly Venus horoscope will love fashion, design, beauty. Rock legend David Bowie had Venus prominent in his horoscope. Venus people will like dressing up – jewellery, fashionable clothes, makeup, and hair. And they might like fine food and extravagance (although that's more Jupiter).

A strongly Venus person might also be strongly sexual, or be seen as someone who is 'desirable.' Many Hollywood 'sex symbols' will have Venus strongly placed (e.g. by sign, aspect, house) in their horoscopes.

Venus (along with Jupiter) is seen as a 'benefic' planet. It can bring nice things, and is considered generally 'good' in its effect and energy. But we need to be careful. Because looks can be deceiving. That beautiful shiny new car - maybe it's a lemon? Or that person you met last night. What are they really like, underneath their particular 'look'?

Venus rules the signs of Taurus and Libra and is associated with copper.

In a horoscope, Venus shows what we love, how we love. It shows our personal style, and how we view and experience love relationships. Someone with Venus in fiery Leo, for instance, will experience relationships quite differently to someone with Venus in earthy Capricorn.

In summary, Venus is that special allure and mystery in life. This might be another person, a particular drink or drug. Venus makes us feel good. Her placement in a horoscope by sign, house etc., will talk about what we love, what we value, and what might make us feel good. Although 'feelings' are more to do with the Moon. And we'll get to her soon.

# Sun

The Sun is the 'giver of life'. And the planets in the sky are only visible to us because they reflect light from the Sun. Without the Sun, we wouldn't be able to see them.

The Sun bestows life to our Earth. It makes the plants grow, and keeps us warm.

Astrologically, the Sun represents our own life force, where we shine. It's also our ego and who we are, our identity.

At best, Sun is about generosity, giving just for the sake of giving. And it is also about honour, and being honoured. The Sun is considered a 'good' (benefic) planet (although it is not technically a planet).

A person with a strong Sun in their horoscope will likely be a leader, someone who likes to be at the centre of their own solar system. At worst, this can be rather egotistical. They expect things to revolve around them, and their needs.

Strong Sun people tend to 'shine.' They have a powerful 'force of personality.' The Sun is associated with kings and queens - rulers who rule just because of who they are, not because of a particular thing they have done.

Strong Sun people see themselves as deserving honour – whether it's deserved or not. The Sun is another masculine sign. And it's rather different from Mars. Mars is more the warrior and fighter, someone who proves themselves by 'doing something'. The Sun person expects things to come to him/her, expects honour *just for being who they are*.

In a horoscope, the Sun represents our self, our ego, and our core identity. It is the essential 'us.' Sun sign columns in newspapers and magazines are written for the zodiac sign the Sun was in at the time and date of your birth. But they don't really give the whole picture, but just the tip of the iceberg.

The Sun in a horoscope will tell us about a person's will, their ego, and how and where they seek to shine. If their Sun is in Gemini, for instance, part of their identity is to do with communication and mental activity. In Leo, it might be about being honoured, and a leader.

The Sun rules Leo, and is associated with gold.

# Mercury ♀

Mercury is about thinking, communication and mental processes.

Mercury can also be the trickster, the clown, the comedian. Mercury traditionally has no fixed gender. He/she can be both/either, depending on circumstance. Mercury is known for its versatility, and being adaptable to many different circumstances.

Mercury, winged messenger of the gods, governs all sorts of communication – speaking, writing, email, letters, phone calls. Mercury is also about the principles of learning and understanding.

Mercury rules Gemini and Virgo and is associated with quicksilver (mercury).

A person with a strong or prominent Mercury in their horoscope might be someone who has a sharp wit, an excellent memory, and clever with words. We use the term 'mercurial' to describe someone like this.

They might be versatile, adaptable. They will have an excellent intellect and learning ability and general intelligence. They might be a scholar or academic, or someone involved in journalism or communication.

They could also be a very critical thinker (this is more Mercury's Virgo side).

In a horoscope, Mercury by sign, house, aspect etc will indicate something about our own thinking and communication style, and how we learn.

For instance, Mercury in Aries means someone abrupt in their communication. Or a Mercury in Pisces person will be more empathetic and sensitive in the way they talk and listen.

The Jim Carey movie, *The Mask*, featured a very mercurial character. When Carey's character puts on the mask of Loki (Norse equivalent to Mercury) he turns into a wild trickster.

Mercury is our assistant in negotiating with the world. How we do that is shaped not only by the sign Mercury inhabits in our horoscope, but by Mercury's house placement and aspects, and other factors. Mercury is considered neither good nor bad, but somewhere in between, depending on the astrological situation. Mercury is an energy that's hard to pin down!

# Moon

The Moon symbolises our emotions and our emotional and security needs.

She waxes and wanes on a regular and consistent basis. So for millennia she has been used as a marker for planting crops and noting other cycles such as the tides. She is associated with silver, and rules the sign of Cancer.

Someone who has a strongly lunar horoscope will have a great deal of empathy and a powerful emotional life. They are likely to feel more connected with life more than most people. Or, at worst, they may feel overwhelmed by emotional forces, 'all at sea' with feelings beyond their control. A strongly lunar person will operate at an intuitive level, because the Moon will give them particular sensitivities. They may be psychic or be clairvoyant in some way.

In a horoscope, the Moon by sign, house, aspect etc will indicate the nature of our emotional life and our security needs – what makes us feel secure, safe, grounded? Someone with a Moon in Leo will find some emotional satisfaction by being recognised and honoured. With a Libra Moon, the need for balance and harmony will be more important – interacting with others will be emotionally rewarding.

The Moon in a horoscope will also indicate what 'home' feels like for that person.

By sign, her placement will also indicate our general emotional sensitivity. For instance, someone born with the Moon in water sign Pisces will be more sensitive than someone with the Moon in a fire sign like Aries. Some with a Scorpio Moon will be emotionally intense.

The Moon's phase at the time of birth is also significant in a horoscope. Someone born just before the full Moon will have a different view of life to someone born just before the new Moon. The full Moon person will have a stronger sense of optimism and possibilities. The new Moon person will have more a sense of 'starting over.'

In summary, the Moon has a strongly feminine, intuitive energy. It is centred around the emotions and instincts, and is quite different to the thinking (Mercury) and ego (Sun) side of our natures. It is reflective, flowing, empathetic energy. At worst, it can be 'giving in' to our instincts and getting lost in inner emotional turmoil.



# Uranus



Uranus is full of surprises.

Discovered in 1781, Uranus is associated with sudden change and unusualness. It's the planet of the unique and quirky, the eccentric. It has a galvanising and inventive side.

It's the only planet that rotates vertically compared to the others in our solar system. It's not associated with any sign, traditionally. Some astrologers assign it to rule Aquarius, but I prefer to stick with Saturn for that sign.

Uranus, along with Neptune and Pluto are what astrologers call the 'transpersonal' planets. They are planets invisible to the naked eye (although Uranus is visible under certain circumstances, apparently), and work at a much deeper level than the inner or personal planets mentioned on the previous pages of this eBook.

Uranus is often prominent in the horoscopes of innovators and inventors, people who think outside the square, and are known to have sudden flashes of insight. Former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott has a horoscope with Uranus in square aspect to his Sun. This accounts for some of his snap decisions, and 'captains calls' where he made a decision without consultation.

Uranus is also associated with revolutions, with the overthrow of the old for a new way of doing things. And it's about suddenness, back-flips and unexpected changes in circumstances.

A strongly Uranian person will could be erratic in some areas of their life. They might be innovative and change direction when you least expect it. They thrive on new ideas, different approaches and non-traditional ways of doing things. And they might have an out-there liveliness and sparkle.

Uranus, like Mercury, is not associated with any particular gender. Some astrologers see Uranus as an 'octave' of Mercury. And it's not associated with a metal.

If anything, Uranus might be associated with a bolt of lightning, and sudden flashes of inspiration. And that inspiration seems to come from a very different place compared to everyday reality.

# Neptune



Neptune is mystical and elusive.

It breaks down boundaries, dissolves things. Neptune is about fantasy, high ideals. It can be considered an 'octave' of Venus. But that's not a common view.

Neptune is to do with idealism on the one hand, and illusion and delusion on the other. It is associated with the movies, dreams, dissolving agents. Movies because they are a kind of fantasy or dream. And dissolving agents or chemicals because they break down barriers by dissolution, which is a very Neptune characteristic.

A strongly Neptunian person will have a vivid fantasy life. They might even write fantasy fiction, or direct fantasy movies. Walt Disney had a very prominent Neptune in his horoscope.

Neptune reminds of Venus, but here the veil of illusion leads to a richer and more otherworldly dimension. Neptune seems to tap into the very fabric of life, at some obscure level. Neptune by nature is hard to pin down, so it's actually quite hard to say too much that is definitive.

Neptune doesn't rule any particular sign, but some astrologers assign it to Pisces. However, that's a recent view, and so I stick with Jupiter as the ruler of Pisces.

However, Neptune is watery and indistinct by nature, like Pisces. And the glyph for Neptune is a trident – the trident of the water god, Neptune.

In a horoscope, Neptune will indicate something about our fantasies, our ideals. And where we might lack sufficient boundaries. Most of the transpersonal planets usually come into play when they aspect an inner or personal planet. 'Aspect' is when two planets are a certain number of degrees (of the zodiac) away from each other. For instance, 90 degrees away from each other is called a square aspect.

And if your horoscope has Neptune in square aspect to your Moon, that will add an extra dimension to your Moon – increasing the sensitivity, the idealism. Particularly if the Moon is in a water sign.

In summary, Neptune is a sensitive otherworldly planetary energy. It is mystical, diffuse, secret and dissolving.

# Pluto



Pluto is power.

Power in the sense of an underlying volcanic energy. Not just the simple, 'let's get this done' drive of Mars. Pluto goes far deeper, and possibly darker, than that.

People with a strong Pluto in their horoscopes are often powerful people. Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft, has a Pluto-Jupiter aspect in his horoscope. And it's in a part of his horoscope associated with money. Jupiter is also about wealth. So we have power and wealth combined. And someone prepared to take risks (Jupiter).

Politicians and those at the top of the corporate ladder are often aided by having Pluto strongly placed in their horoscopes. Pluto turbocharges any inner planet it connects with. A Pluto aspect to Mars in a horoscope will give a highly energised and strong-willed person, who seems to have a vast amount of energy in reserve.

Pluto has no gender, and is not associated with any metal. But as a reminder, I'd connect it with Plutonium, and the atomic bomb. Such is its power.

It doesn't rule any sign, either. Some astrologers suggest it rules Scorpio (one of the most intense signs), but the traditional approach is to assign Mars to Scorpio. So I'll stick with that.

Plenty of people with strong Pluto use their energy wisely. But others with prominent Pluto abuse this power – and use it against themselves or others. Pluto people are never lightweight. At worst, Pluto energies feature in cases of cruelty and abuse.

And it can be the driving force behind personal ambition, the will to 'make it.' This can be in any field – business, politics, and the arts.

Pluto is possibly an octave of Mars. But that's a minority view.

Pluto in our horoscope can be dormant unless it's connected to an inner planet. When it does form an aspect in a horoscope to an inner planet, it brings drive and force to whatever the inner planet represents. Pluto to the Sun – a powerful selfhood and ego, a powerful sense of identity and self. Pluto to Venus – powerful passions, allure, desires. And so on.

People with these kinds of connections have access to large reserves of energy and drive. How they use this energy is up to them. With Pluto, as with all the planets, it can go either way.